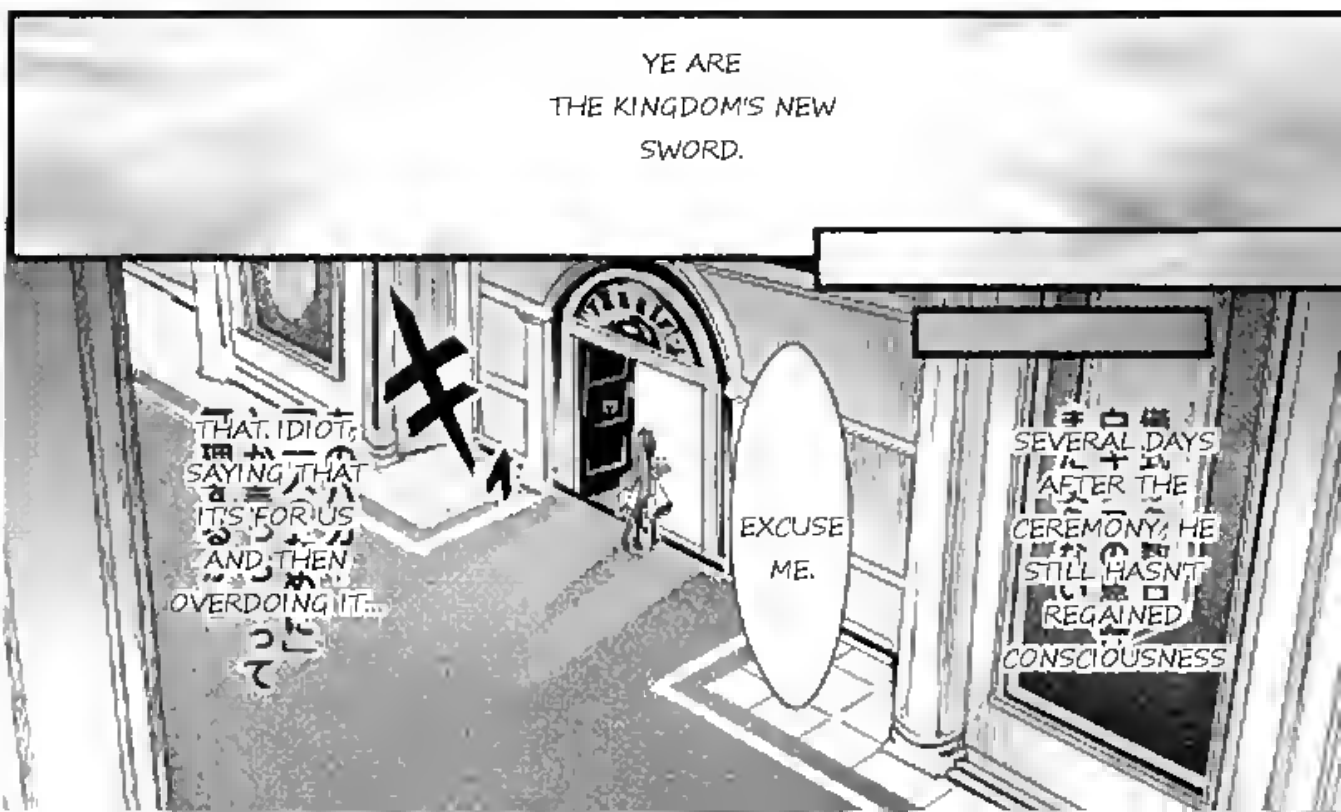
白の皇国物語

第六回

原作：白沢戌亥
漫画：不二まーゆ

アルトデステニアの新たな王よ
NEW LORD OF ALTODESTENIA,
我らの一族に連なる者よ
ONE TIED TO OUR GENEALOGY, ONE WHO HAS SEEN THE KING'S SWORD FOR THE FIRST TIME,
MAY YE NOT FORGET, THAT SWORD CAN DESTROY THE WORLD WITH EASE,
HOWEVER, PROTECTING THE POPULACE WILL BE DIFFICULT, A SWORD IS FOR WOUNDING, HARMING, AND INJURING,
汝剣の
MAY YE NOT FORGET THE SWORD'S
DUTY.


YE ARE THE KINGDOM'S NEW SWORD.
EXCUSE ME.
THAT IDIOT, SAYING THAT IT'S FOR US AND THEN OVERDOING IT...
SEVERAL DAYS AFTER THE CEREMONY, HE STILL HASN'T REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS

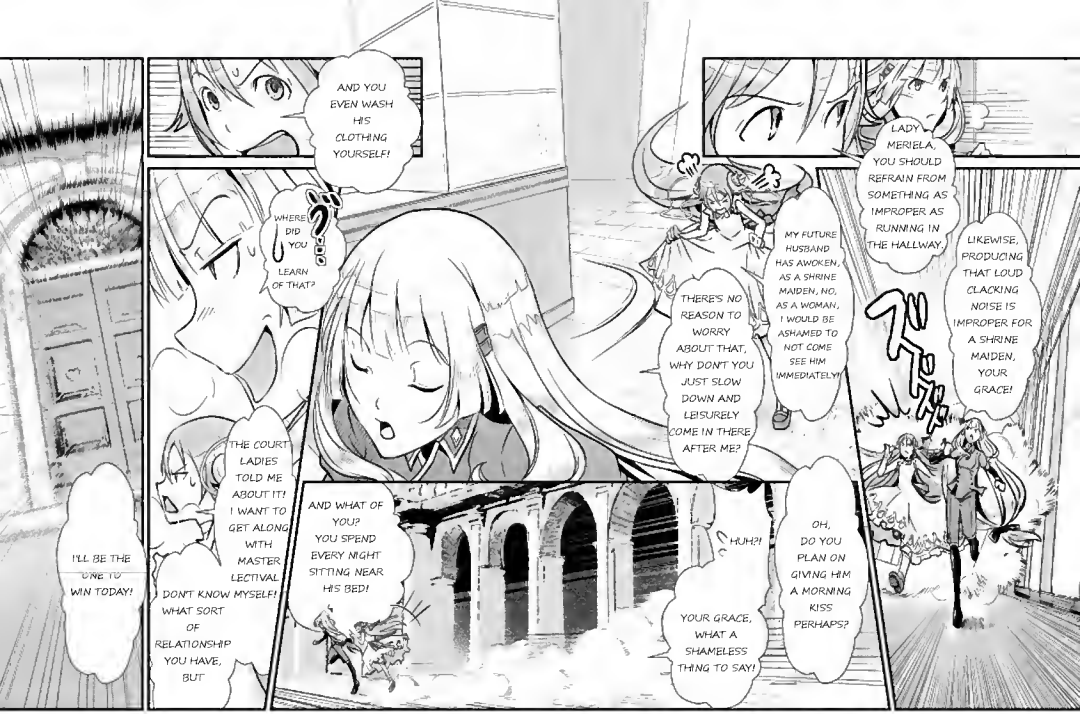
JUST HOW LONG DO YOU PLAN TO SLEEP,
WAKE UP
ALR-
YOUR GRACE,

ARE THE RUMORS OF YOU SPENDING TIME IN LECTIVAL'S ROOM WHILE I WAS AWAY TRUE?
IT IS A PROBLEM FOR THE SHRINE MAIDEN TO UNDERTAKE SUCH ACTIONS.
THAT IS A RATHER UNPLEASANT WAY OF PHRASING IT, MY ACTIONS NORMAL FOR A SHRINE MAIDEN WHOSE DUTY IS TO SUPPORT THE KING.
THE SHRINE MAIDEN UNDERSTANDS THE KING THE MOST, MAKING FOR A GOOD COMPANION, AND OF COURSE, I AM TO BE HIS WIFE IN THE FUTURE.
HOWEVER, AS LECTIVAL HAS YET TO REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS, HE IS NOT CONSIDERED TO BE THE CROWN PRINCE,
THEREFORE HE IS STILL A GUEST OF THE LINDWURM CLAN, SO IT WOULD BE APPRECIATED IF YOU REFRAINED FROM SUCH BEHAVIOR.

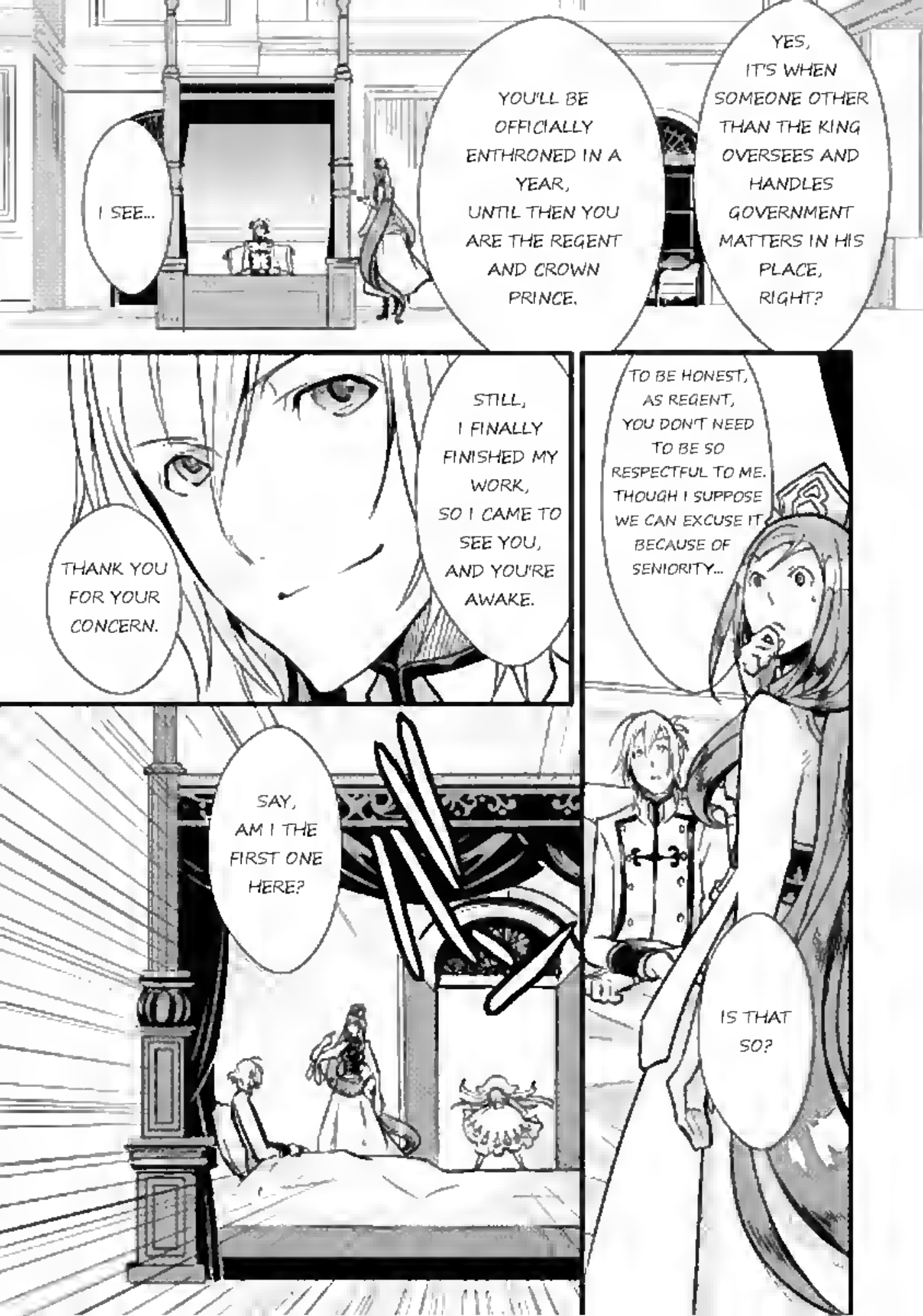
THOUGH HE MAY BE A GUEST OF THE LINDWURM CLAN,
NOR DO I BELIEVE THAT THE BODY OF MASTER LECTIVAL, THE KING, CAN BE ENTRUSTED TO JUST THE CLAN OF A SINGLE DUKE.
YOU ARE NOT THE HEAD OF THE CLAN, LADY MERIELA,
THIS GIRL
UGH...

IS JUST EVIL.
I SHALL TAKE CARE OF MASTER LECTIVAL,
SO PERHAPS YOU SHOULD FOCUS ON ASSISTING THE WHITE DRAGON DUKE, LADY MERIELA?

YOU HAVE A POINT, YOUR GRACE,
HOWEVER, I TOO HAVE A REASON TO-
PRINCESS!
行き過ぎ
THAT MAN YOU FOU-
NO THAT'S NOT RIGHT やないて
JUST AS I WAS MAKING A COMEBACK
HIS HIGHNESS, LECTIVAL, HAS AWOKEN!


LADY MERIELA, YOU SHOULD REFRAIN FROM SOMETHING AS IMPROPER AS RUNNING IN THE HALLWAY.
LIKEWISE, PRODUCING THAT LOUD CLACKING NOISE IS IMPROPER FOR A SHRINE MAIDEN, YOUR GRACE!
ズドド
MY FUTURE HUSBAND HAS AWOKEN, AS A SHRINE MAIDEN, NO, AS A WOMAN, I WOULD BE ASHAMED TO NOT COME SEE HIM IMMEDIATELY!
THERE'S NO REASON TO WORRY ABOUT THAT. WHY DON'T YOU JUST SLOW DOWN AND LEISURELY COME IN THERE AFTER ME?
OH, DO YOU PLAN ON GIVING HIM A MORNING KISS PERHAPS?
HUH?!
YOUR GRACE, WHAT A SHAMELESS THING TO SAY!
AND WHAT OF YOU? YOU SPEND EVERY NIGHT SITTING NEAR HIS BED!
THE COURT LADIES TOLD ME ABOUT IT! I WANT TO GET ALONG WITH MASTER LECTIVAL
DON'T KNOW MYSELF!
WHAT SORT OF RELATIONSHIP YOU HAVE, BUT
I'LL BE THE ONE TO WIN TODAY!
WHERE DID YOU LEARN OF THAT?
AND YOU EVEN WASH HIS CLOTHING YOURSELF!

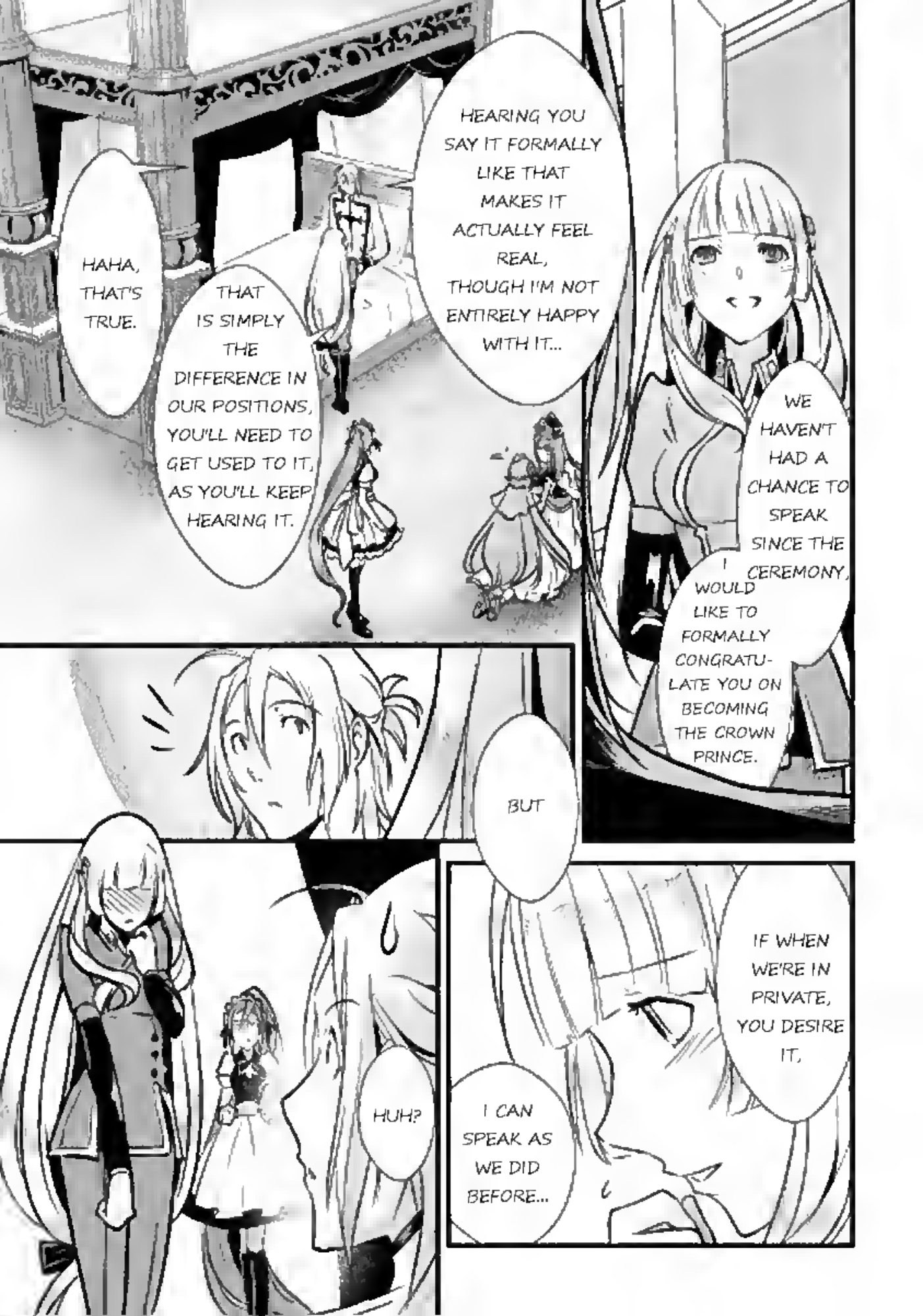
THE KING'S SWORD REALLY DOES CONTAIN JUST RECORDS, I CAN SEE THE VARIOUS MEETINGS AND NEGOTIATIONS THE PAST KINGS ATTENDED, BUT I CAN'T UNDERSTAND THE CONTENTS...
YOU DON'T KNOW THE MEANING OF THEIR WORDS, OR THE CIRCUMSTANCES, SO THAT'S UNDERSTAND-ABLE.
INDEED, THERE'S AN OVERWHELMING AMOUNT OF KNOWLEDGE THAT I LACK.
WELL, YOU'LL LEARN THAT OVER TIME. BY THE WAY, DO YOU KNOW WHAT REGENCY IS?


I SEE...
YOU'LL BE OFFICIALLY ENTHRONED IN A YEAR, UNTIL THEN YOU ARE THE REGENT AND CROWN PRINCE.
YES, IT'S WHEN SOMEONE OTHER THAN THE KING OVERSEES AND HANDLES GOVERNMENT MATTERS IN HIS PLACE, RIGHT?
THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN.
STILL, I FINALLY FINISHED MY WORK, SO I CAME TO SEE YOU, AND YOU'RE AWAKE.
TO BE HONEST, AS REGENT, YOU DON'T NEED TO BE SO RESPECTFUL TO ME. THOUGH I SUPPOSE WE CAN EXCUSE IT BECAUSE OF SENIORITY...
SAY, AM I THE FIRST ONE HERE?
IS THAT SO?

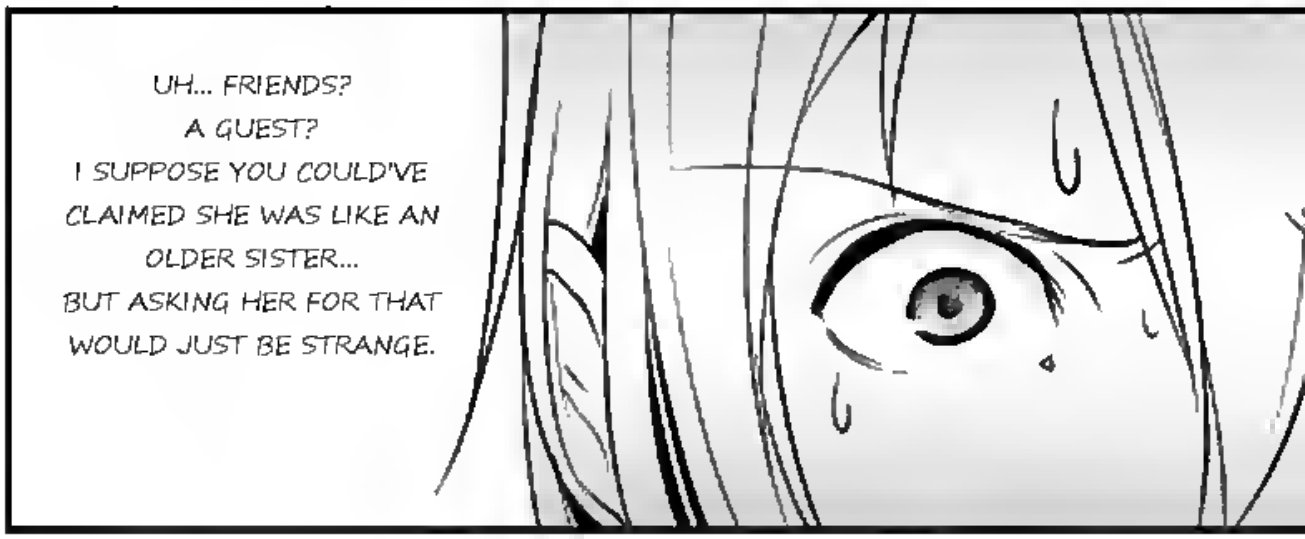
E-ELDER SISTER...
MASTER LEC-
YOUR GRACE, WAIT A MINUTE!

GAH!

L-LILICIA!
...
A-ARE YOU ALRIGHT, YOUR GRACE?!
OH DEAR! MADAM SHRINE MAIDEN!
WAAAH!
10 MINUTES LATER...
I SHOULD HAVE WORN MORE MATURE UNDERWEAR!
WELL, IF YOU SHOW THOSE NOW, YOU'LL BE FINE SHOWING OTHERS LATER...
MADAM MILEIDIA, RATHER THAN CONSOLING HER, YOU MIGHT BE HAVING THE OPPOSITE EFFECT...
YOUR HIGH-NESS,


WE HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO SPEAK SINCE THE CEREMONY, I WOULD LIKE TO FORMALLY CONGRATU-LATE YOU ON BECOMING THE CROWN PRINCE.
HEARING YOU SAY IT FORMALLY LIKE THAT MAKES IT ACTUALLY FEEL REAL, THOUGH I'M NOT ENTIRELY HAPPY WITH IT...
HAHA, THAT'S TRUE.
THAT IS SIMPLY THE DIFFERENCE IN OUR POSITIONS, YOU'LL NEED TO GET USED TO IT, AS YOU'LL KEEP HEARING IT.
BUT
IF WHEN WE'RE IN PRIVATE, YOU DESIRE IT,
I CAN SPEAK AS WE DID BEFORE...
HUH?

I MEAN THAT AS LONG AS IT'S NOT IN PUBLIC, OUR RELATIONSHIP WILL BE WHATEVER YOU DESIRE IT TO BE, YOUR HIGHNESS...
O-OKAY.
SO DO YOU
HAVE ANYTHING IN MIND?
HUH?!
OUR RELATIONSHIP...


UH... FRIENDS?
A GUEST?
I SUPPOSE YOU COULD'VE CLAIMED SHE WAS LIKE AN OLDER SISTER...
BUT ASKING HER FOR THAT WOULD JUST BE STRANGE.

UGH...
YOUR HIGH-NESS?
アラアラ
I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT THIS...
UMM...
UH...
WELL...
んと
なかった
…
I KNOW!
そだ！
HOW ABOUT THIS?
W-WHAT IS IT?
OOH...
A TEACHER AND PUPIL OF A MARTIAL ART INTENDED FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF HEALTH, ALSO ARMULEA PARTNERS.

GAH!
UH...
...
MISS MERIELA, MY EAR! YOU'RE GONNA TEAR OFF MY EAR!
SO THAT'S HOW YOU VIEW ME...
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, THERE'S SOMEONE WHO CAN USE HEALING MAGIC HERE,
AND AS LONG AS YOU HAVE THE KING'S SWORD, WE CAN JUST STICK IT BACK ON.
THAT LAST POINT WENT FROM GOOD TO TERRIBLE!
HE JUST DOESN'T UNDERSTAND A WOMAN'S HEART...
: ω

い立あで
BUT IF THE WHITE DRAGON DUKE HADN'T STOPPED BY MY ROOM, MY EAR...
耳は…
機い
HE SEEMS TO BE IN A WORSE MOOD THAN USUAL...
UGH... THE THOUGHT ALONE GIVES ME THE CHILLS...
YOUR HIGH-NESS,

!
AS YOUR RETAINER, I OFFER YOU MY APOLOGIES FOR DOING THIS HERE...

W-
WHAT
IS IT?
何だ？
WHAT?
今度は
DO
何をやら
I DID
SOMETHING
自分ー
AGAIN?
!?
んだ

HIS FATHER...
I'VE ENSURED THAT NO ONE ELSE IS HERE.
W-WHITE DRAGON DUKE, WHAT IF SOMEONE SEES THIS?!
ACTING BASED ON YOUR RETAINERS' ADVICE ISN'T A BAD THING.
ALLOW ME TO OFFER WORDS OF ADVICE TO THE ONE WHO SHALL RULE OVER AND GUIDE THE PEOPLE.
FIRST, I'D LIKE TO APOLOGIZE FOR MY IMPOLITENESS UP TO NOW.
MY FATHER ENTRUSTED ME WITH THIS TEACHING FOR THE KING.
BUT THERE IS NOTHING WORSE THAN ENTRUSTING ALL YOUR DECISIONS TO YOUR RETAINERS.

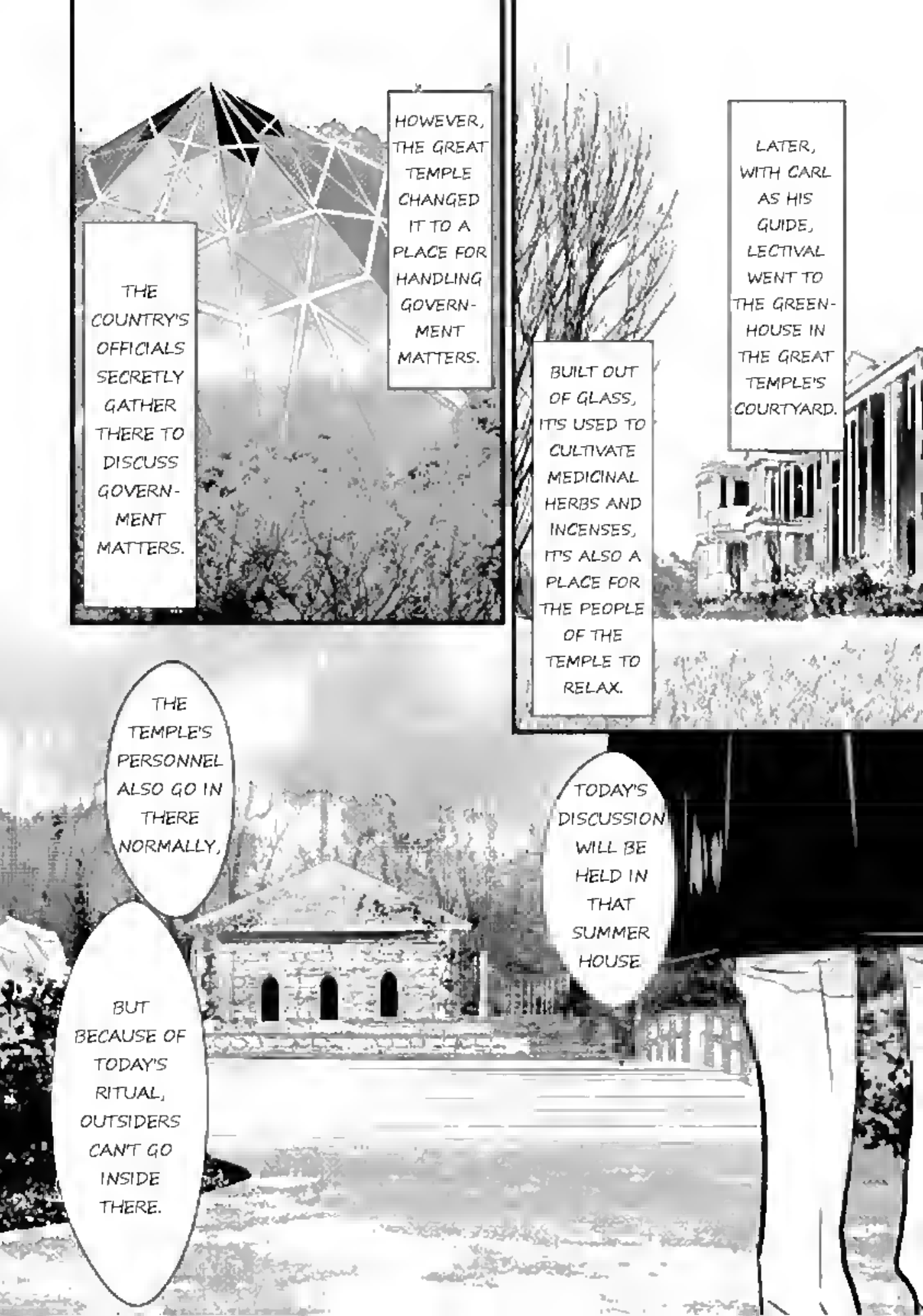
YOUR HIGHNESS
TO ACT BASED ON YOUR VASSALS' ADVICE IS FINE,
BUT THERE IS NOTHING WORSE THAN ENTRUSTING ALL YOUR DECISIONS TO OTHERS.
WHAT I MEAN IS, AS THE ONE TO RULE OVER PEOPLE, YOU MUSTN'T LOSE YOUR OWN THOUGHTS.

SO THAT RECORD IS OF THE WHITE DRAGON DUKE'S FATHER...
SO SIMPLY PUT, REGARDLESS OF WHAT OTHERS SAY, I SHOULD THINK FOR MYSELF?
DID YOU HEAR MY FATHER'S WORDS?

YES.
SO I PASSED THIS TEST?
YOU PASSED WITH FLYING COLORS, FOR NOW...
YES, IF SOMEONE WERE TO BE CONTROLLED BY THE SWORD, I WAS TO CUT THEM DOWN, REGARDLESS OF WHO THEY MIGHT BE.
IS THAT ALSO SOMETHING YOU WERE TAUGHT BY YOUR FATHER?
THAT IS GOOD TO HEAR, YOU ARE ABLE TO SEE HISTORY WITHOUT LOSING YOURSELF TO THE SWORD'S POWER.
IF THE NEED ARISES, KILL ME, THERE'S NO GUARANTEES.
JUST AS I'D WANT IT.
"FOR NOW"... IF I MAKE A SINGLE MISTAKE, I'LL SIMPLY BE KILLED.
IN THAT CASE
AS YOU WISH.
I KNOW I'LL CONTINUE BEING KING UNTIL I DIE.

IS YET ANOTHER DUTY OF THE KING.
DYING AT THE RIGHT TIME
THERE ARE MANY THINGS BEYOND ME, AND YOU MUST HAVE MANY COMPLAINTS, WHITE DRAGON DUKE,
WHAT IS YOUR REPLY, WHITE DRAGON DUKE CARL?
ON TOP OF THAT, I'LL BE TROUBLING YOU PLENTY,
BUT THE PRICE FOR THAT IS ME BEING THE KING.

I HAVE COMPLAINTS ABOUT THIS YOUNG MAN,
I EVEN FEEL UNEASE,
BUT AT THE SAME TIME,
I ALSO HAVE HOPES.
THE WHITE DRAGON, CARL LINDWURM
ACCEPTS THIS DUTY.


THE COUNTRY'S OFFICIALS SECRETLY GATHER THERE TO DISCUSS GOVERNMENT MATTERS.
HOWEVER, THE GREAT TEMPLE CHANGED IT TO A PLACE FOR HANDLING GOVERNMENT MATTERS.
BUILT OUT OF GLASS, IT'S USED TO CULTIVATE MEDICINAL HERBS AND INCENSES, IT'S ALSO A PLACE FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE TEMPLE TO RELAX.
LATER, WITH CARL AS HIS GUIDE, LECTIVAL WENT TO THE GREENHOUSE IN THE GREAT TEMPLE'S COURTYARD.
THE TEMPLE'S PERSONNEL ALSO GO IN THERE NORMALLY,
TODAY'S DISCUSSION WILL BE HELD IN THAT SUMMER HOUSE
BUT BECAUSE OF TODAY'S RITUAL, OUTSIDERS CAN'T GO INSIDE THERE.

THE HOLY CHIVALRIC ORDER ISN'T GUARDING IT TODAY EITHER.
AS EXPECTED, YOU NOTICED THAT,
PLEASE REMEMBER WHAT I HAVE EXPLAINED TO YOU,
THE PEOPLE I AM GOING TO INTRODUCE WILL NOT LOOK DOWN UPON YOU THEN.
HOWEVER,
I'VE ALREADY GIVEN UP ON BEING LOOKED DOWN ON,

TO BE ABLE TO WIELD THE KING'S SWORD, WELL, HE WOULD NEED 10 YEARS— NO, EVEN MORE... BUT HE CERTAINLY HAS THE QUALITIES OF A LORD.
SILENCING THE OPPONENT IS THE PROOF OF A LORD.
YOUR HIGHNESS, WHILE I AM YOUR RETAINER, INSIDE THERE I WILL STAY NEUTRAL.
ALL THAT IS LEFT IS TO SEE IF WE WILL JOIN HANDS AGAIN...
WELL THEN, LET US GO FORTH.